The Official Publication of the Great Seminole Nation of Oklahoma

Enrollment: 18,800

Rvfo Ecuse - January 2016



Pages - 10-12

**Frequentley Asked Ouestions for Tax** Season **Community - 8** 

\$4,000,000 to Cobell Education **Scholarship Fund** National - 7

**Tips for Managing** Your Diabetes in the **New Year Health & Wellness - 5** 



# **HUD** and Veteran Affairs Announce Award for Native American Homeless Veterans at Quarterly Inter-Tribal **Council Meeting**

Cokv Tvlvme Staff Report media@sno-nsn.gov

For the first time, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today awarded \$5.9 million in grants to 26 Tribes to offer a permanent home and supportive services to Native American Veterans who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness. The Tribal HUD-Veterans

Affairs Supportive Housing (Trib-**HUD-VASH**) Program is a demonstration program that will combine \$5.9 million in rental assistance from HUD with case management and clinical services provided by VA to serve 500 Native American Veterans.

HUD Secretary Julián Castro announced the winners in Tulsa, Okla., at the winter meeting of the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes.

"By targeting resourc-

es directly to Tribes, we can better honor the service and sacrifice of Native American Veterans who now need a roof over their heads," said Castro. "These heroes deserve hope for a brighter future, and by offering permanent housing solutions, combined with needed services and case management, we can work with Tribes to end veteran homelessness."

HUD invited 30 eligible Tribes to seek Tribal **HUD-VASH** vouchers to help house and serve hundreds of Native American Veterans who are currently experiencing homelessness or at extreme risk of becoming homeless. Twenty-six Tribes, from Alaska to New Mexico, will deliver and manage the housing vouchers among their members who need them, on tribal lands.

"Targeting HUD-VASH vouchers to Veterans living on tribal lands opens new opportunities for helping Native American Veterans exit homelessness

as quickly as possible" said Secretary of Veteran Affairs Robert Mc-Donald. "We are pleased that recent statutory changes to the HUD-VASH Program made it possible to award these vouchers for use within Indian Country, where Native American Veterans have existing support systems that can be aided by those provided under the HUD-VASH Program to help the Veterans remain stably housed."

Since 2008, more than 79,000 vouchers have been awarded and approximately 103,000 homeless Veterans have been served through the

broader **HUD-VASH** program. Rental assistance and supportive services provided through **HUD-VASH** are a critical resource for local communities in ending homelessness among our nation's Veterans. In FY2015, Congress authorized funding for a demonstration program in order to expand the HUD-VASH program into Indian Country and directed HUD to coordinate with Indian Tribes, tribally designated housing entities and other appropriate tribal organizations on the design of this program, and to ensure the effective delivery of housing assistance and supportive services to eligible Native American Veterans.



**Five Civilized Tribes** quarterly Inter-Tribal council meeting in Tulsa, Okla. From left to right: **Tribal Government** Relations Specialist, Mary Culley; Governor Bill Anoatubby, Chickasaw Nation; Muskogee **VAMC Director Richard Crockett; Principal Chief** Leonard Harjo, Seminole **Nation; Principal Chief** Bill John Baker, Cherokee Nation; HUD Secretary Julián Castro; Chief Gary Batton, Choctaw **Nation; Principal Chief** James Floyd, Muscogee (Creek) Nation; and Dr. Darnell, OKC VAMC **Medical Center Director.** 



VRAKKUECETV VFASTECETV FVCCETV VNOKECKV MERRETV EM VNICETV

# Executive Office











The *Cokv Tvlvme* is published monthly by the Seminole Nation Communications Department and is the official publication of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma. Its purpose is to meet any possible need of the tribe and its citizens through the dissemination of information.

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http://sno-nsn.gov/services/communications/ cokvtvlvme







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# Seminole Nation Employee Activity Team December 2015 Newsletter

Cokv Tvlvme Staff Report media@sno-nsn.gov

December was a very busy month for the Seminole Nation Employee Activity Team.

The team kicked off the month of December with the 2nd Annual Toy Drive with a little friendly competition. Employees could rally teams together and whichever team donated the most toys would win the prize, which was a \$75.00 gift certificate to Roma's Italian Restaurant, and other individual treats! We had a total of 6 official teams; we also had individual offices donate that chose not to participate in the competition. The toys were distributed to the Seminole Nation Head Start Program and also a portion of the toys went to the Indian Child Welfare (ICW) Wish List. The toys that went to ICW were distributed to the children in Foster homes.

We appreciate everyone who generously donated toys to make the 2nd Annual Toy Drive a HUGE SUCCESS!

Our second event of the Holiday Season was the Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest. The contest was held and winner decided on Friday December 18, 2015. We had several participants and all had wonderful sweaters that made the decision for the judges Marilyn Davis, Larry Factor and Linda Martin very difficult to select a winner.

The SNEAT would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and we look forward to a very eventful and exciting 2016! Thank you to everyone for making our events a success!



Chief Harjo, First place Heather Marshall, 2nd Place Jaymie McKane and 3rd Place April Harjo., Vice Chief Johnson.



ICW Director Tracy Haney, Child Welfare Specialist Liz Bible and SNEAT Chairperson Kim Abel



HeadStart Director Robin Horton and staff along with SNEAT Chairperson Kim Abel



Winning Team Patricia's Angels



## Birthdays

January 1	Thomas Billie
January 2	Sabrina Brummet
January 2	Teresa Johnson
January 3	George Allen
January 3	Janice Birdcreek
January 6	Carolyn Crenshaw
January 6	Louise Johnson
January 7	Newman Crow, Jr.
January 8	Cowena Anderson
January 9	Bryden Johnson
January 9	Tawny Rae Lena
January 11	Aubree Johnson
January 11	Jerry Corona
January 12	Marilyn Davis
January 12	Martha Gibson
January 12	Jerry Walker
January 14	Joe Farani
January 15	Shirley Harrison
January 15	Elizabeth Rhodes
January 15	William Driver
January 15	Shaun Gates
January 16	Bill Davis, Jr.
January 16	Henson D. Lena
January 16	Steven Ahgoom
January 17	Lydia Withers
January 18	Dylan Corona
January 18	Aeryk Deere
January 19	Joe Little
January 20	Lizzie Gates
January 20	Susan Faxon
January 21	Evelyn Cherry
January 21	Aubrey Rose Ricketts
January 21	Elyse Wind
January 22	Carrie Walker-Wood
January 23	Nan Harjo
January 24	Marcia Billie
January 25	Isabelle Fixico
January 26	Patricia Morgal
January 26	Jesse Howard
January 27	Abraham Davis II
January 27	Courtney Richardson
January 28	Michelle Billie
January 28	Rachel Dinwiddie
January 29	Adam Foster, Sr.
Innuary 21	Airronili Eigh

Happy Birthday!!!

#### Seminole Nation Diabetes Program February 2016 Events Schedule

Mon. Feb. 1 10:00 - 11:00 am 1:30 - 3:00 pm

January 31

January 31

Stretch Wewoka OAP

Aiyanili Fish

Tony Tiger

Winter Diabetes Support Group Cvfekne Wellness Center

Shirley Walker, Sharon Burgess, Connie Buck, Marly Larney, April Harjo, Heather Marshall and Jaymie McKane	
Tues. Feb. 2	Healthy Brain, Healthy Mind
10:00 - 11:00 am	Cvfekne Wellness Center
Wed. Feb. 3	Age Waves
2:00 - 3:00 pm	SSC Pool
Thurs. Feb. 4	Tai Chi
10:00 - 11:00 am	Wewoka OAP
Mon. Feb. 8 10:00 - 11:00 am 2:00 - 3:00 pm	Stretch Wewoka OAP Age Waves SSC Pool
Tues. Feb. 9	Healthy Brain, Healthy Mind
10:00 - 11:00 am	Cvfekne Wellness Center
Wed. Feb. 10	Age Waves
2:00 - 3:00 pm	SSC Pool
Thurs. Feb. 11 10:00 - 11:00 am 6:45 - 7:45 pm	Tai Chi Wewoka OAP Liquid Fusion SSC Pool
Tues. Feb. 16	Healthy Brain, Healthy Mind
10:00 - 11:00 am	Cvfekne Wellness Center
Thurs. Feb. 18	Tai Chi
10:00 - 11:00 am	Wewoka OAP
6:45 - 7:45 pm	————————————————————————————————————

10:00 - 11:00 am
2:00 - 3:00 pm

Age Waves
SSC Pool

Liquid Fusion
SSC Pool

Tues. Feb. 23
10:00 - 11:00 am
5:30 - 7:00 pm

Wewoka OAP
Age Waves
SSC Pool

Healthy Brain, Healthy Mind
Cvfekne Wellness Center

Post-Lifestyle Balance Class
Cvfekne Wellness Center

Stretch

Mon. Feb. 22

Wed. Feb. 24
2:00 - 3:00 pm

Age Waves
SSC Pool

Thurs. Feb. 25
10:00 - 11:00 am
6:45 - 7:45 pm

Tai Chi
Wewoka OAP
Liquid Fusion
SSC Pool

Mon. Feb. 29
10:00 - 11:00 am
2:00 - 3:00 pm

Stretch
Wewoka OAP
Age Waves

SSC Pool



## **General Council**

# Quarterly Meeting December 5, 2016

## **Unfinished Business**

#### • Tribal Resolution 2015-61

A verbal Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma authorizing a forensic audit of the Seminole Nation, including the Seminole Nation Division of Commerce; Seminole Nation Gaming Enterprises; Seminole Nation Gaming Agency; Business & Corporate Regulatory Commission; and Seminole Nation Housing authority, from FY 2002 to present to be paid for from remaining household assistance funds. sponsored by Charlie Hill

#### **REMAINED TABLED**

### **Reports of Committees**

Gaming Agency Gaming Enterprise Department of Commerce **BCR Commission** Land Acquisition Board Veterans Affairs Committee Housing Authority Language Curriculum Committee Personnel Board Wewoka Serv. Unit Health Advisory Board TERO Commission Color Guard Princess Committee SN Health Advisory Board Judicial Committee SN Roads Committee Early Childhood Committee Finance Committee

# **New Business**

### • Tribal Ordinance 2015-12

A Tribal Ordinance of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma amending the finance code of the Seminole Nation, codified at Title 14 Chapter 2 Section 201, of the Seminole Nation Code of Laws.

 $sponsored\ by\ David\ Narcomey$ 

### **APPROVED 16-9**

Mekusukey: *no*, *no*Eufaula: *yes*Tusekia Harjo: *yes*, *yes*Nurcup Harjo: *yes*, *yes*Hecete: *no*Ocese: *yes*, *yes*Bruner: *yes*, *yes* 

Fushutche: yes, yes Rewalke: yes, yes Hvteyievlke: yes, yes Tom Palmer: no, no Tallahassee: no, no Ceyvha: no, no Dosar Barkus: yes

### Tribal Resolution 2015-80

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma approving the fiscal year 2016 Environmental Health Services budget; incorporation in the FY 2016 comprehensive budget; and authorizing an appropriation. sponsored by David Narcomey

### **APPROVED 19-6**

Mekusukey: *no*, *no*Eufaula: *yes*Tusekia Harjo: *yes*, *yes*Nurcup Harjo: *yes*, *yes*Hecete: *yes*Ocese: *yes*, *yes*Bruner: *yes*, *yes* 

Fushutche: *yes*, *yes*Rewalke: *no*, *no*Hvteyievlke: *yes*, *yes*Tom Palmer: *yes*, *yes*Tallahassee: *no*, *no*Ceyvha: *yes*, *yes*Dosar Barkus: *yes* 

### • Tribal Resolution 2015-81

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma approving the fiscal year 2016 Tribal Negotiation Grant budget; incorporation in the FY 2016 comprehensive budget; and authorizing an appropriation. sponsored by David Narcomey

## APPROVED 19-6

Mekusukey: no, no Eufaula: yes Tusekia Harjo: yes, yes Nurcup Harjo: yes, yes Hecete: yes Ocese: yes, yes Bruner: yes, yes Fushutche: yes, yes Rewalke: yes, yes Hvteyievlke: yes, yes Tom Palmer: yes, yes Tallahassee: no, no Ceyvha: yes, yes Dosar Barkus: yes

## • Tribal Resolution 2015-82

A Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma General Council formally naming the Community Center commonly known as Strother Community Center in honor of reverend Thomas Little. sponsored by Sterling Springer

#### **APPROVED 15-8-2**

Mekusukey: no, no
Eufaula: yes
Rewalke: no, no
Tusekia Harjo: yes, yes
Nurcup Harjo: yes, yes
Hecete: yes
Ocese: no, no
Ceyvha: yes, yes
Dosar Barkus: yes

#### Tribal Resolution 2015-83

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma reappointing Susie Harjo to the Seminole Nation Business and Corporate Regulatory Commission.

Sponsored by Abraham Farani

#### **APPROVED 19-6**

Mekusukey: no, no
Eufaula: yes
Rewalke: no, no
Tusekia Harjo: yes, yes
Nurcup Harjo: yes, yes
Hecete: yes
Ocese: yes, yes
Bruner: yes, yes

Fushutche: yes, yes
Rewalke: no, no
Tusekia Harjo: yes, yes
Tom Palmer: yes, yes
Tallahassee: no, no
Ceyvha: yes, yes
Dosar Barkus: yes

#### Tribal Resolution 2015-84

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma reappointing Jonah Harjo to the Seminole Nation Roads Committee. sponsored by Wayne Shaw

#### **APPROVED 19-6**

Mekusukey: yes, yes
Eufaula: yes
Rewalke: yes, yes
Tusekia Harjo: yes, yes
Nurcup Harjo: no, no
Hecete: yes
Ocese: no, no
Bruner: yes, yes

Fushutche: yes, yes
Rewalke: yes, yes
Hvteyievlke: yes, yes
Tom Palmer: yes, yes
Tallahassee: no, no
Ceyvha: yes, yes
Dosar Barkus: yes

#### Tribal Resolution 2015-85

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma reappointing Juanita Scott to the Seminole Nation Administrative Appeals Board.

sponsored by Karen Fullbright

#### **APPROVED 17-8**

Mekusukey: no, no
Eufaula: yes
Rewalke: no, no
Tusekia Harjo: yes, yes
Nurcup Harjo: yes, yes
Hecete: yes
Ocese: yes, yes
Bruner: yes, yes

Fushutche: yes, yes
Rewalke: no, no
Tom Palmer: no, no
Tallahassee: no, no
Ceyvha: yes, yes
Dosar Barkus: yes

## • Tribal Resolution 2015-86

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma reappointing Regina Lankford to the Seminole Nation Administrative Appeals Board.

sponsored by Cheri Hardeman

### **APPROVED 19-6**

Mekusukey: no, no
Eufaula: yes
Tusekia Harjo: yes, yes
Nurcup Harjo: yes, yes
Hecete: yes
Ocese: yes, yes
Bruner: yes, yes

Fushutche: yes, yes
Rewalke: yes, yes
Hvteyievlke: yes, yes
Tom Palmer: no, no
Tallahassee: no, no
Ceyvha: yes, yes
Dosar Barkus: yes

### • Tribal Resolution 2015-87

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma reappointing John Narcomey to the Seminole Nation Administrative Appeals Board.

sponsored by David Narcomey

## APPROVED 19-6

Mekusukey: yes, yes
Eufaula: yes
Rewalke: yes, yes
Tusekia Harjo: yes, yes
Nurcup Harjo: yes, yes
Hecete: yes
Ocese: no, no
Ceyvha: yes, yes
Dosar Barkus: yes

### Tribal Resolution 2015-88

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma reappointing Frank Alexander to the Seminole Nation Administrative Appeals Board.

sponsored by Nancy Fixico

### APPROVED 19-6

Mekusukey: yes, yes
Eufaula: yes
Rewalke: no, no
Tusekia Harjo: yes, yes
Nurcup Harjo: yes, yes
Hecete: yes
Ocese: yes, yes
Bruner: yes, yes

Fushutche: yes, yes
Rewalke: no, no
Tom Palmer: no, no
Tallahassee: no, no
Ceyvha: yes, yes
Dosar Barkus: yes

## • Tribal Resolution 2015-89

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation

# **Court Filings for December, 2015**

#### <u>Civil</u>:

Tessa Pierce v. Timothy

Rector, Jr. Custody

Tracy Mitchell v. Shane

Thomas Custody

Henry Yargee v. Cherraine Dinwiddie

Dinwiddie Custody

# **Divorce:** David Deer v.

Rebecca Deer Dissolution of Marriage

Shereena Miller v.

Michael D. Miller Dissolution of Marriage

Madison A. Factor v.

Amin Factor Dissolution of Marriage

Jesse Earley v.

Rina Earley Dissolution of Marriage

Dakota Miranda v.

Hector Miranda Dissolution of Marriage

# **Child Support:** No filings this period.

#### **Protective Orders:**

2 protective orders were filed.

#### Juvenile:

2 guardianships involving minor children were filed.

#### **Criminal**:

None filed this period.

### Cases Heard:

There were 4 court sessions held this period involving the following case types:

Criminal - 3 Civil - 38

Domestic Violence - 1 Child Support - 30 Juvenile - 16

### TOTAL CASES HEARD THIS PERIOD: 88

of Oklahoma reappointing Ida Gonzales as the Seminole Nation delegate to the Five Tribes Inter-Tribal Council. sponsored by Nancy Fixico

### **APPROVED 17-8**

Mekusukey: no, no
Eufaula: yes
Rewalke: no, no
Tusekia Harjo: yes, yes
Nurcup Harjo: yes, yes
Tom Palmer: no, no
Hecete: yes
Ocese: yes, yes
Ceyvha: yes, yes
Bruner: yes, yes
Dosar Barkus: yes

## • Tribal Resolution 2015-90

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma reappointing Terri Haney as the Seminole Nation delegate to the Five Tribes Inter-Tribal Council.

sponsored by Sterling Springer

### **APPROVED 13-12**

Mekusukey: no, no

Eufaula: yes

Tusekia Harjo: yes, yes

Nurcup Harjo: no, no

Hecete: yes

Ocese: no, no

Bruner: yes, yes

Fushutche: yes, yes

Rewalke: yes, yes

Hvteyievlke: yes, yes

Tom Palmer: no, no

Tallahassee: no, no

Ceyvha: no, no

Dosar Barkus: yes

### • Tribal Resolution 2015-91

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma reappointing David Narcomey as the Seminole Nation delegate to the Five Tribes Inter-Tribal Council.

sponsored by Kelly Davis

### **APPROVED 13-12**

Mekusukey: no, no
Eufaula: yes
Rewalke: no, no
Tusekia Harjo: yes, yes
Nurcup Harjo: no, no
Hecete: yes
Ocese: yes, yes
Bruner: yes, yes

Fushutche: yes, yes
Rewalke: no, no
Tom Palmer: no, no
Tallahassee: no, no
Ceyvha: no, no
Dosar Barkus: yes

### • Tribal Resolution 2015-92

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma confirming reappointment of James (Jimmy) Factor to the Seminole Nation Gaming Enterprise Board of Directors. sponsored by Patricia Kishketon

### **FAILED 11-14**

continued on the next page

# announcements NAK-OK KER KUECETV



# legislation

continued from page 3

Mekusukev: no, no Eufaula: *no* Tusekia Harjo: *no*, *no* Nurcup Harjo: no, no Hecete: yes Ocese: yes, yes Bruner: yes, yes

Fushutche: yes, yes Rewalke: yes, yes Hvtevievlke: yes, yes Tom Palmer: no, no Tallahassee: *no*, *no* Ceyvha: no, no Dosar Barkus: no

#### Tribal Resolution 2015-93

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma appointing Marilyn Moore to the Seminole Nation Trust Fund Management Board.

sponsored by Lottie Coody

#### **FAILED 11-14**

Mekusukev: no, no Fushutche: ves, ves Rewalke: no, no Eufaula: *yes* Tusekia Harjo: *no*, *no* Hvteyievlke: no, no Tom Palmer: no, no Nurcup Harjo: ves, ves Hecete: yes Tallahassee: no, no Cevvha: no, no Ocese: yes, yes Bruner: yes, yes Dosar Barkus: yes

Tribal Resolution 2015-94

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma appointing Kathrine McCoy to the Seminole Nation Finance Committee. sponsored by Charlie Hill

#### **APPROVED 21-4**

Mekusukey: *yes, yes* Eufaula: *yes* Tusekia Harjo: *yes*, *yes* Nurcup Harjo: yes, yes Hecete: yes Ocese: no, no Bruner: no, no

Fushutche: yes, yes Rewalke: yes, yes Hvteyievlke: *yes, yes* Tom Palmer: yes, yes Tallahassee: yes, yes Ceyvha: yes, yes Dosar Barkus: yes

#### Tribal Resolution 2015-95

A Tribal Resolution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma authorizing a renewal of the Aid to Tribal Government (ATG) Annual Funding Agreement (AFA).

sponsored by Nanette Hazelwood

### **APPROVED 22-2**

Mekusukey: *yes, yes* Eufaula: *yes* Tusekia Harjo: *yes*, *yes* Nurcup Harjo: *yes*, *yes* Hecete: *yes* Ocese: yes, yes Bruner: yes, yes

Fushutche: *yes*, *yes* Rewalke: yes, yes Hvteyievlke: yes, yes Tom Palmer: *yes, yes* Tallahassee: no, no Ceyvha: *yes* Dosar Barkus: yes

watch this and other **General Council Meetings** online, anytime

www.sno-nsn.gov



The Seminole Nation Tribal Complex (405) 257 - 7200

#### **Seminole Nation Diabetes Program March 2016 Events Schedule**

Wed. March 2 2:00 - 3:00 pm

Age Waves SSC Pool

Thurs. March 3 10:00 - 11:00 am 6:45 - 7:45 pm

Tai Chi Wewoka OAP Liquid Fusion

SSC Pool

Stretch

Wewoka OAP

Mon. March 7 10:00 - 11:00 am

6:45 - 7:45 pm

Wed. March 9

2:00 - 3:00 pm

2:00 - 3:00 pm

Age Waves SSC Pool Liquid Fusion

Age Waves

SSC Pool

SSC Pool

Thurs. March 10 10:00 - 11:00 am 6:45 - 7:45 pm

Tai Chi Wewoka OAP

Wed. March 16 2:00 - 3:00 pm

Age Waves SSC Pool

Liquid Fusion

SSC Pool

Thurs. March 17 10:00 - 11:00 am

Tai Chi Wewoka OAP

Stretch

Mon. March 21 10:00 - 11:00 am 2:00 - 3:00 pm

Wewoka OAP

6:45 - 7:45 pm

Age Waves SSC Pool

Wed. March 23

Age Waves SSC Pool

Liquid Fusion

SSC Pool

Thurs. March 24 10:00 - 11:00 am

6:45 - 7:45 pm

2:00 - 3:00 pm

Tai Chi Wewoka OAP Liquid Fusion

SSC Pool

Mon. March 28 10:00 - 11:00 am

2:00 - 3:00 pm

6:45 - 7:45 pm

Stretch Wewoka OAP Age Waves

Liquid Fusion SSC Pool

**55C Pool** 

Tues. March 29 5:30 - 7:00 pm

Post-Lifestyle Balance Class Cvfekne Wellness Center

Wed. March 30 2:00 - 3:00 pm

Age Waves

Thurs. March 31 10:00 - 11:00 am

6:45 - 7:45 pm

SSC Pool

Tai Chi

Wewoka OAP Liquid Fusion SSC Pool

Thursday March 10th

Grisso Mansion

Annex

The Burial Assistance Program provides a grant for funeral expenses of eligible deceased tribal members. In some cases the deceased may be eligible for benefits even though they were not a tribal member at the time of death, such as persons eligible for membership who had membership pending applications and children eligible for membership under the age of one year.

The grant amount for a stillborn or deceased under the age of one year old is the actual cost of

the funeral expense not to exceed \$800. The grant amount for a deceased over the age of one year is \$3,000, unless the deceased was cremated, in which case the grant amount shall be in the amount of the actual cost of the burial, not to exceed \$3000. A grant of \$300 will also be paid to the responsible member of the family to cover miscellaneous funeral expenses

Applications must be made within ninety (90) days from the date of death of the deceased.



Oklahoma Healthy Aging Initiative

#### Healthy Brain, **Healthy Mind**

Developed within the University Of Oklahoma Department Of Geriatric Medicine, this four week program is designed to help individuals understand the many different paths to maintaining a healthy brain, which also leads to good mental health. Participants will learn more than a dozen ways to improve their physical and mental health. Through class discussion and participation, those who take this class will finish the workshop with the information they need to take action towards

Walk away with tools for:

- Setting goals and finding success
- · Engaging in healthy activities Identifying signs of stress & depression
- Thriving vs. getting by
- · Dealing with the blues & stress

OHAI

405-271-6424 CentralOHAI@ouhsc.edu

Classes will be held at:

**Cvfekne Wellness Center** 35445 Highway 59

Seminole, OK 74868

Tuesdays

4 weeks

Starting February 2<sup>nd</sup>

Everyone is welcome to participate owever, space is limited. If you are rested in attending the Healthy Brain,

Healthy Mind program, please contact

Already completed our 6 week Lifestyle Balance Class? Then come join us for our Post-Lifestyle Balance Class!!

ady completed the initial 6 week Lifestyle Salance Class. This class will reinforce ideas

Classes will be held the last Tuesday of each

February 23, 2015 5:30-7:00 pm

Cvfekne Wellness Center 35443 W. Highway 59 Seminole, OK 74868 For questions or additional information please call Robyn Hutchins at (405)-234-5276.

Seminole Nation Diabetes Program

The Seminole Nation Vineyards together with USDA NRCS

# invite you to an Agriculture Workshop

Looking to get healthy in the new year? Wanting to lose weight?

Need help to get started or stay on track?

WE CAN HELP!

The Seminole Nation Diabetes Program will be offering a Lifestyle Balance Class to help you learn ways to live a heathier lifestyle!

Lifestyle Balance Classes are designed for individuals who are interested in improving their health and either preventing or delaying Type II Diabetes. However, this class is FREE AND OPEN TO ANYONE, including those with diabetes. This course helps you to learn the facts about lifestyle changes you can make to improve your health, including nutrition and physical activity. Door prizes and refreshments will be given. We would love to see you there!

Class starts Tuesday, March 1, 2016 from 3:30-5:00 p.m. at the Cvfekne Wellness Center 35445 W. Highway 59 Seminole, OK 74868. This is a 6 week course. Classes will be held at the same time and location weekly.

For more information or to RSVP, please contact Robyn Hutchins at (405)-234-5276 or hutchins.r@sno-nsn.gov













Seminole Nation Vineyards 612 E Wrangler Boulevard Seminole, OK 74868 Phone: 405-382-2445 Fax: 866-678-6770 Cell: 405-220-2752



- Soil Preparation Spring Gardening Pollinators – Monarch Butterflies
  - Crop Insurance
  - Feral Hog Management
- Invasive Species Eastern Red Cedar USDA Programs – How to get started
  - Free Lunch

This workshop is open to the public and lunch will be provided at no cost. Contact Janet Johnson at 405-220-2752 for more information. RSVP is requested.

Please RSVP to Carol Crouch at 405-742-1203 or email at Carol.Crouch@ok.usda.gov. Sponsored by the Seminole Nation Vineyards Project and USDA NRCS.

# Eath & WEINES CVFEKNE ENHERET



# **Be SMART:** Do You See Steping-**Stones or Roadblocks?**

James Fife Staff Report fife.j@sno-nsn.gov

February 2016 Diabetes event schedule on page 2, after birthdays.

March 2016 Diabetes event schedule on page 4, announcements.

# **Diabetes Program Update**

Robyn Hutchins, RN Seminole Nation Diabetes Program Program Nurse (405)-234-5276

Happy New Year everyone! I am excited to announce that The Diabetes Program has several upcoming events that we would like to invite you to. I've attached flyers for all events to this email. If you know anyone who might be interested or could benefit from one of these classes, please help me spread the word. If you have any questions, need more information or want to sign-up for a class, please contact me. Hope to see you all at one of our events!

2016. This is the current year. For many people this signifies a new year; and with that the mantra of "New year. New me." One of the first cognitive actions to take place at this time is to hit the nearest exercise facility and get

on the road to being healthy and lose weight &/or gain muscle. However, the first setback one experiences can allow for a total cease in actions and positive thinking. "I only went 15 minutes on the elliptical...couldn't make

it for an hour....for the 4th day in a row. This is a terrible experience!" "Dang...I could bench 245 easily back in high school. I can barely get 145 now." "I'm so sore. I'm not going to exercise today." "I've eaten badly for the last

# **Tips for Managing Your Diabetes in the New** Year

The New Year is a great time to make resolutions. Why not make yours about taking control of your health? You can do this by setting goals to better your diabetes management and overall health. Your diabetes management goals should be specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic and time-limited. Here are some examples of annual and daily goals for diabetes management to set for yourself this year:

#### **Annual Goals**

- See your physician at least 2 to 4 times a year. (Be sure to report any abnormalities or complications you might encounter to your physician)
- Follow your schedule for checking your blood glucose levels.
- Know about the medications you are taking, including side effects.
- · Know and keep these numbers in check: A1C, blood pressure and cholesterol levels.
- Get a renal function test and microalbumin test each year.
- Move those muscles. Any form of physical activity is a step in the right direction.
- Create a well-balanced meal plan with your diabetes educator. (Meet with Seminole Nation Diabetes Program Nurse for more information on nutritional
- Have your eyes checked yearly.
- Visit your dentist twice a year.
- ALWAYS be prepared for a low or high blood glucose reaction. Know the warning signs, what actions to take in order to correct abnormal glucose levels and discuss these with your family so they know how to help if and when symptoms occur.
- · Stop smoking.

#### **Daily Goals**

- Check blood glucose X times a day. (Depending on what your physician suggests)
- Stay on Track. Take all diabetes-related medications at the same time daily.
- Examine your feet for any sores, cuts or wounds.
- Keep skin moisturized.
- Brush and floss your teeth.
- Don't get discouraged. Just because you have one bad day doesn't mean you can't do this! You can start over and get back on track again the following day. We have classes starting soon to help get your health on the right track. For more information or to make an appointment with our diabetes nurse educator, please call (405)-234-5276.

Robyn Hutchins, R.N. Program Nurse Seminole Nation Diabetes Program as well quit trying to eat healthy." There is so much more that one will say to oneself when situations like these come up. However, it is vital and severely important to remember this: Setbacks are not roadblocks. Allow a moment for that previous sentence to sink in. Setbacks. Are. Not. Roadblocks. At the very least setbacks allow one to briefly reset/refocus, assess and begin again. The path to success is not ever easy, nor is it always a straight-line path. Often, success is an ever winding path that if one traces will find that the path can loop in the same area more than once before winding to another area. It can be a maddening process, yet a rewarding one as well.

3 out of 5 days...might

With the process of success mimicking an ever-winding path one can see how roadblocks can become detrimental. Can an individual become discouraged when their positive thinking becomes negative and ceases their actions? Yes (nodding head vehemently in agreement). But, should one cease all that they are doing? No (said with a determined look on one's face). Healthy behaviors are very difficult to begin. I know that sounds incredibly confusing, but it is shockingly true. Any behavior change in general is difficult to begin. However, once a person has begun to master the behavior, that behavior becomes a habit just as much as brushing teeth. In truth, it takes around 60 days (8 weeks; +/-6 days) for a healthy behavior to adhere 1,2. In more truthiness (yes, that is an actual word much to my astonishment as well), those 60 days will be difficult for the individual, but provoking change will not be impossible. The individual's mindset will determine if they succeed or not. If I were to encounter each of the individuals who may say the passages from the previous paragraph I would retort with:

"You have made it into the gym for 4 straight days! You're doing

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jamesclear/forming-new-habits\_b\_5104807.html

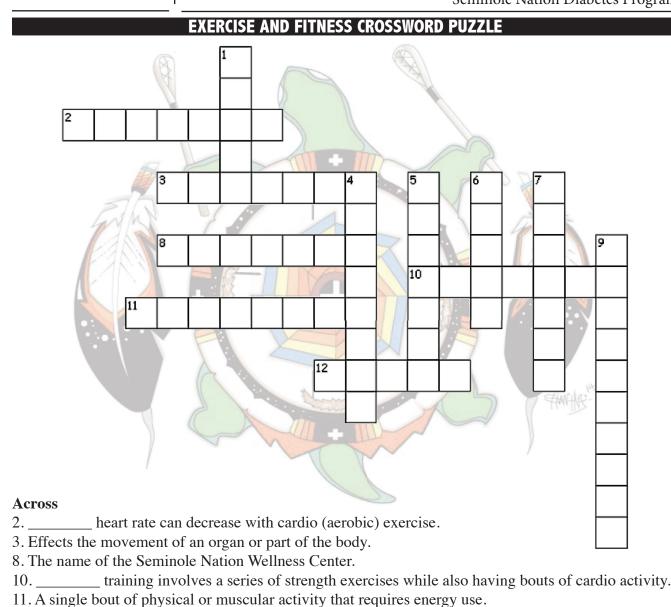
https://www.ucl. ac.uk/news/news-articles/0908/09080401

great and you've actually achieved an hour in total time." "245 will be a goal for the future. 145 is our baseline to work with, not your maximum; so, let's build up your strength." "You must have exercised really hard? However, and this may sound crazy, but the best way to overcome soreness is to move around/maintain activeness." "There is nothing wrong with comfort foods every now and then. Besides, skipping meals is more harmful towards your body and goals." Rephrasing those negative comments into something more positive can be the difference in giving up and continuing

In addition to rephrasing, setting specific, measureable, achievable, realistic, and time-phased goals (or SMART goals) are key to overcoming roadblocks. An example of a SMART goal would be: I will cut down on the number of fast food meals I eat per week from 10 to 4. Now let's examine that previous sentence. Is it specific, measurable, achievrealistic, able, time-phased? Indeed; it is specific due to the topic of eating fast food meals; it is measurable due to the observance in number of days one is eating fast food; it is achievable because there are alternative to eating fast food meals; it is realistic because it is challenging, yet not discouraging; it is time-phased due to the process being limited to a weekly basis. It can also be helpful to revisit your goals, values, motivators/motivations, and wellness vision from time to time. This will allow you to refocus on the importance of what you are doing and keep the focus off the chal-

During the process of behavior change, you will discover a lot about yourself. You will uncover strengths you did not know you had, see weakness as opportunities to turn into strengths, and develop a resolve that only you can unravel. A successful change hinges entirely upon you. What type of individual do you wish to become? And will your current decisions and actions help you become that individual?

lenges/roadblocks.



### **Down**

1. Surround and protect organs and gives attachments points for muscles.

12. Makes up most of the body weight & you should drink 8 cups every day.

- 4. One type of muscle fiber.
- 5. A primary energy source for the body.
- 6. Carries oxygen and nutrients to the cell and remove waste.
- 7. Recommended amount of physical activity is at least 30
- 9. Can improve range of motion, agility, functional flexibility, etc.
- \*Answers can be found on page 7 at the end of National News.

### Seminole Nation Diabetes <u>Program</u>

James Fife, B.S., B.A., CI-CPT **Seminole Nation of Oklahoma Diabetes Program - Exercise Specialist** Office: 405 234 5247 Work Cell: 405 683 0844 fife.j@sno-nsn.gov

# Higher **Education**

The deadline to apply for the BIE Scholarship for Spring 2016 term is as follows: February 14, 2016. Students will need to submit an application with the following documents: (1) CDIB, (2) Seminole Nation Tribal Card (3) Official High School Transcript or GED Diploma (4) Official College/University Transcript), (5) Enrollment Schedule.

Students can request an application be mailed to them by calling the Higher Education office at (405) 257-7263 or stop by the office at 215 E. Evans in Seminole.

Students can also download the application at www.sno-nsn.gov.

## Adult **Education**

Scrubs are now available for all Native Americans living in Seminole County, who are 18 years of age or older, who are attending vo-tech seeking employment.

For more information call the Adult Education office at (405) 257-7263 or stop by the office at 215 E. Evans in Seminole.

# **General Ed**ucation Class **Schedule**

General Education classes are now being held Monday-Thursday 1:00pm-4:30pm at the Adult Education Office located at 215 E. Evans, and also on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30pm-6:30pm at the Adult Education Office.

For more information call 405-257-7263.

# **Undergradu**ate Scholarships

Wilson-Hooper Veterinary Medicine Assistance Program

The Wilson-Hooper Veterinary Medicine Program Assistance provides scholarships to students pursuing veterinary medicine and technician veterinary degrees. If you love animals and possess the desire to pursue a degree at an accredited college or university, you may be qualified for funding from the Wilson-Hooper Assistance Program.

### Eligibility:

- Pursuing a degree in Veterinary Medicine (DVM) or Veterinary Technology (Associates of Applied Science Degree)
- Enrolled full-time in a nationally accredited college or university in the U.S.
- Enrolled or a descendant of a fed-

- erally-recognized American Indian tribe.
- Maintain a B aver-

Awards are merit based and there is opportunity for multi-year funding.

#### **Cobell Scholars**

This scholarship was established as a result of the Cobell v. Salazar litigation. The Cobell Scholars Program is intended to provide financial assistance in the form of scholarships to American Indian and Alaska Native students to defray the cost of attendance at post-secondary vocational schools and institutions of higher education, including graduate and professional schools.

Eligibility: Scholarships in various amounts are awarded to U.S. federally-recognized American Indian and Alaska Native community members (students) who are vocational certificate-seeking or associate, bachelor, graduate and professional degree-seeking students in full-time, accredited, non-profit institutions in the United States; and who are able to demonstrate financial need through the submission of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

A complete application will consist of:

- 1. A completed General (deadline June 1);
- 2. Completion of Cobell Scholars opportunity-specific questions; and,
- 3. **Tribal** Eligibility Certificate (The TEC is due on the day the application is due. Individuals applying for multiple opportunities should submit just one TEC to AIGC.) which is also available in the Scholarships section titled Online Application Instructions; and,
- 4. Financial Needs Form (due July 15) which is also available in the Scholarships section titled Online Application <u>Instructions</u>.

#### Wells Fargo American **Indian Scholarship**

This scholarship is • funded by Wells Fargo and administered by American Indian Graduate Center (AIGC). To be considered for the Wells Fargo scholarship, an applicant must:

an enrolled Be member of a U.S. federally-recognized American Indian tribe or Alaska Native group, as verified through submission of the AIGC Tribal Eli-

Certificate gibility (TEC);

- Be pursuing a career and degree in fields relating to banking, resort management, gaming operations, management and administration, including accounting, finance, information technology and human resources;
- Be a college junior or senior at a U.S. accredited college university full-time and degree seeking student maintaining an average GPA of a 3.00 on a 4.00 scale at the time of application;
- Demonstrate financial need through submission of the Financial **AIGC** Need Form (FNF).

#### **Accenture American Indian Scholarship** Fund

The Accenture American Indian Scholarship Fund was established to build personal and lasting relationships with students who will become the future leaders in the American Indian communities and possibly with Accenture. At that time, the scholarship sought the very brightest American Indian and Alaska Native incoming freshman and undergraduate students. The Accenture scholarship program is sponsored and funded by Accenture and Application administered by the American Indian Grad-

uate Center (AIGC). Each academic year, Accenture selects students who demonstrate character, personal merit and commitment to the American Indian community locally and/ or nationally. Merit is demonstrated through leadership in school, civic and extracurricular activities, academic achievement, and motivation to serve and succeed. Eligibility requirements include the following:

- Be an enrolled member of a U.S. federally-recognized American Indian tribe or Alaska Native group, verified through submission of the AIGC Tribal Eligibility Certificate (TEC) form;
- Be seeking a degree and career in fields of study including: various engineering, computer science, operations management, management, finance, marketing, and other business oriented fields;
- Be entering a U.S. accredited college or university as a full-time, degree seeking college undergraduate freshman. High School

transcript must have a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or greater, on a 4.0 scale at the end of the seventh semester.

Demonstrate character, personal merit and commitment to the American Indian Community locally and/or nationally. Merit is demonstrated through leadership in school, civic and extracurricular activities, academic achievement, and motivation to serve and succeed.

# Graduate **Fellowships**

Wilson-Hooper Veterinary Medicine Assistance Program

See Wilson-Hooper Medicine Veterinary Program Assistance above, under Undergraduate Scholarships, for more information.

#### **Cobell Scholars**

See Cobell Scholars above, under Undergraduate Scholarships, for more information.

#### **BIE STEM Loan for Service**

AIGC administers a Bureau of Indian Education contract to provide financial assistance in the form of loans to eligible American Indian and Alaska Natives seeking graduate and professional degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The goal is to promote opportunity for careers with tribal governments, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Affairs—funded organizations on and off reservations. Loans are paid back at the rate of one year of service for one year of funding.

To be considered for the AIGC STEM Loan for Service, the applicant must:

- Be an enrolled member of a U.S. federally-recognized American Indian tribe or Alaska Native group, or possess ¼ degree federally-recognized Indian blood to be verified only through submission of a Tribal Eligibility Certificate (TEC);
- Able to demonstrate financial need through submission of a Financial Need Form (FNF);
- Be (or will be) pursuing a master's or doctorate degree as a full-time degree-seeking student at an accredited graduate school in the U.S. Exclusive consideration is paid to degree candidates in the Science, Tech-

nology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields to be verified though submission of current transcripts or proof of acceptance to an eligible program.

#### **AIGC Fellowship**

The AIGC Fellowship program provides approximate \$1,200,00 in fellowships to over 400 American Indian and Alaska Native graduate and professional students each year. Graduate fellowships are monetary awards made to American Indian and Alaska Native graduate or professional full-time, degree-seeking students, who meet all eligibility criteria. The fellowship amount is typically between \$1000 and \$5000 per academic year (not including summer), and varies from year to year, depending on the number of qualified applicants, the availability of funds and unmet financial need.

To be considered, applicants must be:

- Pursuing a post-baccalaureate graduate or professional degree as a full-time student at an accredited institution in the U.S.;
- Able to demonstrate financial need through submission of the AIGC Financial Need Form (FNF), and;
- An enrolled member of a federally recognized American Indian or Alaska Native group, or provide documentation of descent (possess one-fourth verifiable degree federally-recognized Indian blood) as verified through submission of a Eligibility Tribal Certificate (TEC).

#### **AIGC Loan for Ser**vice

AIGC administers a Bureau of Indian Education contract to provide financial assistance in the form of loans to eligible American Indian and Alaska Natives seeking graduate and professional degrees. The goal is to promote opportunity for careers with tribal governments, Bureau of Indian Affairs—funded organizations on and off reservations. Loans are paid back at the rate of one year of service for one year of funding.

To be considered for the AIGC Loan for Service, the applicant must:

- Be pursuing a graduate or professional degree as a fulltime student at an accredited institution in the U.S.;
- Able to demonstrate financial need

- through submission of a Financial Need Form (FNF);
- An enrolled member of a federally-recognized American Indian or Alaska Native group, or provide documentation of descent (possess one-fourth degree verifiable federally recognized Indian blood) verified through submission of a Tribal Eligibility Certificate (TEC), and;
- Have a 3.0 GPA.

#### Wells Fargo American **Indian Scholarship**

See Wells Fargo American Indian Scholarship above, under Undergraduate Scholarships, for more information, with the exception of (3rd bullet):

Be an incoming graduate or professional school student at a U.S. accredited college or university as full-time and degree-seeking studnet with an average GPA of a 3.00 on a 4.00 scale.

#### **REDW Native Amer**ican Scholarship in Accounting

This scholarship is funded by REDW, a national certified public accounting and business consulting firm that boasts many American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and enterprises among their clients. REDW recognizes not only the need for scholarship support for Native people to enter the field. REDW will support 2 students, studying

- Accounting, each year. Must be an enrolled member of a U.S. federally recognized American Indian tribe or Alaska Native group, as verified through submission of the AIGC Tribal Eligibility Certificate (TEC);
- Must be pursuing a career and degree in the field of accounting;
- Preference for undergraduate applicants; must be a full-time, accounting degree-seeking college undergraduate junior or senior and must meet the Federal Pell Grant eligibility criteria. Graduate students
- must be full-time, accounting gree-seeking graduate student and demonstrate financial need.

Note: REDW will provide priority application status to scholarship recipients, for paid REDW internships, in either the Phoenix, AZ or Albuquerque, NM offices.

> continued on page 9 after in memoriam

# troa news opunvkvsan





## Meet a Seminole Nation Lighthorseman

Joe Clay Staff Writer clay.j@sno-nsn.gov

Meet the newest member of the Seminole Nation Lighthorse. Seminole Nation tribal member Anthony Louie also a member of the Eufaula band. Louie previously worked for the Central Oklahoma Juvenile Center and Oklahoma Baptist University before coming to work for the Seminole Nation. Louie wanted to get into law enforcement because of the influence of the current Chief of Lighthorse Kent Dowell.

Louie is excited to get the opportunity to work for the Seminole Nation Lighthorse.

people and helping to get them on the right path," said Louie.

privilege getting to work with Seminole Nation being a tribal member, not only for law enforcement but to give back to the people," added Louie.

Louie is currently in his Council of Law Enforcement Education Training in Ada. CLEET is where Cadets go to get their full time certification. They go over legal block, firearms, defensive tactics and all the things they need to learn to become a certified police officer in the State of Oklaho-

Louie's future goals for

"I like working with being a Lighthorseman is to start an Explorer Program. Getting tribal kids involved in law en-"It's an honor and a forcement and helping push kids in the right direction so maybe one day they might want to be in law enforcement.

## **Notary Public**

Julie Gear, with the Seminole Nation Communications Department, would like to inform the Nation that she is a Notary Public. She charges \$2 per item and requires you to have proper photo identification available.

# Career Opportunities

Seminole Nation is always looking for qualified employees. We seek highly motivated, talented candidates to join our staff and offer a competitive benefits package to our employees.

We are now only accepting online applications through our Careers Portal. Paper applications are no longer accepted, however you may come into the HR Department and apply through the Career Kiosk.

Electronic applications must be received by noon on the closing date of the specified announcement.

NOTE: Our online application process requires an active email address. If you do not have an email address, you can create one for free at Outlook.com or Google. Current Opening(s):

Job Title: Teacher Department: Child Care **Open Date**: 2/5/2016 **Close Date:** 2/19/2016

For more information go to the Careers Portal at: jobs.sno-nsn.gov/careers.

# Free Workshop hosted by Mvskoke **Food Sover**eignty Initiative

A free workshop for farmers, ranchers and veterans will be held Friday, March 11 from 9-4 in Okmulgee, OK on the campus of the College of the Muscogee Nation. The Myskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative (MFSI) is hosting a presentation by Ms. Janie Hipp (Chickasaw) and Creek Nation Realty Dept. on financial management and accessing Restricted land. Ms. Hipp is Director of the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative as well as Legal Council and teacher for Restricted lands and Financial Literacy issues at the University of Arkansas School of Law. She has been

working with OK Farm Credit officials in providing a financial training curriculum for farmers and ranchers that can be accessed online.

The first ever "Restricted Lands Guidebook", written by Ms. Hipp and MFSI Director, Lizanne Holata, will be distributed. The guidebook will provide step-bystep instructions for accessing Restricted lands and detailed information on services offered by Muscogee Creek Nation Realty Department. It will include a list of legal aide and attorneys that specialize in legal matters pertaining to Restricted lands and will be available online soon at the MFSI website link below.

Please call Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative to register at 918-756-5915.

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative www.mvskokefood.org

College of the Muscogee Nation www. mvsktc.org



Date: January 6, 2016 Contact: Interior\_ Press@ios.doi.gov

# **Interior De**partment **Transfers Additional \$4** Million to **Cobell Edu**cation Scholarship Fund

Contributions from Land Buy-Back Program help fund opportunities for American Indian and Alaska Native students

WASHINGTON -With its newest contribution, the U.S. Department of the Interior announced today that it has transferred \$4 million to the Cobell Education Scholarship Fund Fund), (Scholarship bringing the total transferred funds to nearly \$35 million. The Scholarship Fund -- funded in part by the Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations (Buy-Back Program) and authorized by

-- provides financial assistance through scholarships to American Indian and Alaska Native students wishing to pursue post-secondary and graduate education, and training.

The Buy-Back Program was created to implement the land consolidation component of the Cobell Settlement, which provided \$1.9 billion to purchase fractionated interests in trust or restricted land from willing landowners. Consolidated interests are transferred to tribal government ownership for uses benefiting the reservation community

and tribal members. To date, the Buy-Back Program has paid more than \$730 million to individual landowners and restored the equivalent of nearly 1.5 million acres of land to tribal governments. Interior makes quarterly transfers to the Scholarship Fund as a result of Program's land sales, up to a total of \$60 million. The amount contributed is based on a formula set forth in the Cobell Settlement that sets aside a certain amount of fund-

ing depending on the

the Cobell Settlement value of the fractionated interests sold. These contributions do not reduce the amount that an owner will receive.

> "The Interior Department is committed to taking meaningful steps to help fulfill the President's goal of investing in the future of tribal nations," said Interior Solicitor Hilary Tompkins, who negotiated the Settlement on behalf of the Department of the Interior. "These scholarship funds help us meet that commitment by putting a down payment on the future of Indian Country and investing in the success of Native youth."

> Alex Pearl, Chairman of the Cobell Board of Trustees, added: "The Cobell Board of Trustees is excited about the New Year and the opportunities that it brings to improve the efficiency, performance, and impact of the Cobell Scholarship Fund. Imperative to our success is the thoughtful partnership with Solicitor Tompkins and her staff. Our shared goal of designing the Cobell Scholarship Fund to address the unique obstacles for Native American and Alaskan Native

students demands bold leadership and a commitment to the principles embodied by Elouise Cobell's life and work. We are confident now more than ever that Solicitor Tompkins and her staff understand these distinct issues and amazing opportunities for the Cobell Scholarship Fund."

The Cobell Board is responsible for the oversight and supervision of the activities of the fund's administering organization. The Scholarship Fund, administered by the American Indian Graduate Center (AIGC) in New Mexico, has begun disbursing approximately \$2.5 million in funds in its first round of awards. Scholarship recipients represent more than 80 Tribal Nations who will be attending more than 175 different academic institutions. More information can be found at aigcs.org.

"The Cobell Board of Trustees made a clear commitment to Native Americans' higher education with \$2 million in scholarship awards for higher education in the 2015/2016 academic

year," said Joan Currier,

Interim CEO of American Indian Graduate Center. "We look forward to the next round of awarding in the New Year."

Landowners who are interested in learning more about the Program are encouraged to attend the upcoming Listening Session on March 3, 2016, hosted by Interior Deputy Secretary Michael L. Connor at the Albuquerque Convention Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from 1:00-5:00 p.m. MT. In addition to the Listening Session, federal staff will be available from 11:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. to discuss the Program, answer landowner questions, provide information about financial education and appraisals, and register interested sellers.

The Program recently launched a two-pronged Planning Initiative to help determine its implementation next schedule for 2017 and beyond. Eligible tribal governments not already scheduled implementation and all landowners with fractional interests are invited to formally indicate their interest in participating in the Program no later than March 11. 2016.

Landowners can contact the Trust Beneficiary Call Center at 888-678-6836 or visit their local Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) to update their contact information, ask questions about their land or purchase offers, and learn about financial planning resources.

More information and detailed frequently asked questions are available at http://www. doi.gov/buybackprogram to help individuals make informed decisions about their land.

# \*Answers for Crossword Puzzle

### Across

2: Resting

3: Muscles

8: Cvfekne 11: Exercise

### 12: Water

**Down** 

1: Bones

4: Skeletal

5: Glucose 6: Heart

7: Minutes 9: Stretching

# Community ETVLW



# Frequently **Asked Ques**tions for Tax Season

Daniel P. Knudsen Tribal Tax Advocate Oklahoma Indian Legal Services, Inc. 4200 Perimeter Center Drive, Suite 222 Oklahoma City, OK 73112

Tax season 2015 is nearly here. Once W2s begin to issue, taxpayers will begin the process of filing their tax returns. One area where taxpayers can run into trouble is in selecting a filing status. It is important to use the correct filing status when filing your taxes. A taxpayer's filing status can impact the benefits he or she receives, standard deduction amounts, and even the total amount of taxes paid. In some circumstances, a taxpayer's filing status can even determine whether he or she files a tax return at all.

There are five separate filing statuses. They are:

1) Single, 2) Married Filing Jointly, 3) Married Filing Separately, Head of Household, and 5) Qualifying Widow(er) with Dependent Child.

A tribal taxpayer is Single if they are not married, divorced, or legally separated according to state law.

A tribal taxpayer who is married and chooses to file his or her returns on a joint return is eligible to file Married Filing Jointly. It is important to remember that in Oklahoma common law marriages are recognized. One of the indications that you have entered into a common law marriage is filing tax returns together. You cannot file as married filing jointly and then apply for some other program or benefit as single. If you were married at one time, whether common law or statutory law, you must get a legal divorce in court.

If a spouse died during the tax year, the surviving spouse may still elect to file a joint return for the tax year. A tribal taxpayer who chooses to file separate from his or her spouse may file Married Filing Separately, this will generally result in a higher tax being paid.

A tribal taxpayer who is not married and has paid more than half of the cost of maintaining a home for themselves and another qualifying person may file his or her return as Head of Household.

A tribal taxpayer whose spouse passed away in a period of years prior to the tax year who also

has a dependent child and meets a series of conditions may choose to file as a Qualifying Widow(er) with a Dependent Child.

The Head of Household filing status is the most confusing and the staus most frequently erroneously claimed.

A taxpayer may only claim Head of Household if he or she was 1) single, 2) paid more than half of the cost of maintaining their home for not just themselves, but also for another person who is considered "qualifying." Not everyone will qualify. Often, taxpayers claim Head of Household filing status in error as it provides a more beneficial standard deduction.

Here are some filing status examples:

Scenario 1:Taxpayer A is divorced with one child. Their ex-spouse, B, does not have custody of the child but will claim the exemption for their child for the current tax year. Can A qualify as Head of Household

for the current tax year? The answer is maybe.

Taxpayer A may qualify to file as Head of Household even though he or she is not claiming the exemption for the child if they meet all of the following requirements. First, Taxpayer A must be unmarried or be unmarried on the last day of the year. Second, A must have paid more In cases where there is a than half of the cost of maintaining the house where A and the child live for more than half of the year. Third, the child must be A's Qualifying Child whether A can claim the child as a dependent or not or a Qualifying Relative whom A can claim as a dependent. The terms "Qualifying Child" and "Qualifying Relative" are very specific terms which detail a certain relationship, so if a tribal taxpayer is not sure, they should always ask to ensure they are claiming a child or relative correctly.

Scenario 2: Tribal taxpayer A and their spouse separated in July of the year. By December 31st, the last day of the year, they were still living separately but had not yet divorced or legally separated. A wonders if he or she can file as Head of Household so that he or she can claim the credit for childcare expenses and the earned income tax credit for their qualifying child?

The answer is no.

A cannot file as Head of Household because A was considered married on the last day of the tax year. Even if A and B were legally separated, they would have been considered unmar-

ried at the end of the tax year only if A and B had not lived in the same household for the last six months of the tax year. In the example, A was married on the last day of the tax year and had he or she obtained a divorce or legal separation, B lived in A's home until July, which would mean that they had only lived apart for 5 months, not 6 as the IRS requires. This may cause A further issues because he or she would likely use the filing status of Married Filing Separately, and would not be able to claim either the earned income tax credit or the credit for childcare expenses.

Scenario 3:

A and B are the parents of a one-year-old child. They never married but lived together with their child for the tax year. Both A and B contribute to the support of the household they and their child live in. May A and B both file as Head of Household?

The answer is no.

Only one tribal taxpayer may claim the child as a qualifying child for purposes of filing as Head of Household. To file as Head of Household, one must pay more than half of the cost of the household expenses. Since both parents are paying equally, neither is paying more than one half.

tie, the IRS has a series of tiebreaker rules they use to settle these kinds of cases. They are as follows...

The following types of taxpayers may claim a child as a Qualifying Child. First, parents who file a Joint return may claim the child as a Qualifying Child. Second, a parent who is married to a child's stepparent may claim the child as a Qualifying Child. Third, if two parents do not file a joint tax return together, the parent with whom the child lived with the longest during the tax year may claim the child as a Qualifying Child. Fourth, if the child lives with both parents equally, the parent with the highest Adjusted Gross Income may claim the child as a Qualifying Child. Fifth, if one parent cannot claim the child as a Qualifying Child, then the parent with the highest Adjusted Gross Income may claim the child as a Qualifying Child. Lastly, if a parent chooses not to claim the child as a Qualifying Child, then the parent with the highest Adjusted Gross Income may claim the

Very importantly, if A were to claim his or her child to claim the Earned

# Veteran's Corner

by K. Galen Greenwalt, Director of Veterans Services Office

(North Community Building, Mekusukey Mission)

#### FEBRUARY 2016

This column is an information source for all veterans in the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma. Please share this with those who have served in our military forces, both past and present. Please feel free to come by the Veterans Services Office during the week, or give us a call at (405) 234-5242 to ask questions or make an appointment. My email address here at the office is greenwalt.g@sno-nsn.gov and you are welcome to contact me by email.

#### WHO IS A VETERAN?

The question is asked many times, "Who exactly is a veteran?" A veteran is anyone who has served in the U.S. Armed Forces, both combat and non-combat service. So, the question we ask is, "Have you served in the military?" If the answer is "yes," then you are a veteran! Our office is here to help you.

#### SEMINOLE **NATION** VETERANS MEMORI-

**AL CEMETERY** On the last day of December 2016, we held a Memorial Service at our Seminole Nation Veterans Cemetery. The service was for a WWII veteran, Annella Belle Carpitcha Kemp. She was a Cryptographic Technician and was sent to the European Theater of Operations. We continue to pass the word out, that all veterans with an Honorable Discharge are eligible for burial benefits at no cost.

Annella Belle Carpitcha Kemp is pictured here:





#### **CEREMONIAL** SIGNING TO BE HELD

**FEBRUARY 5, 2016** As of this writing, a Ceremonial Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of VA and Seminole Nation leadership will be held at the Reynolds Wellness and Community Center in Seminole on Friday, February 5, 2016 at 10 am. This document provides for Native American Veterans and their spouses to have the opportunity to use their VA home loan guaranty benefit on Federal trust land. For more information, contact our office and the VA benefits will be explained for any assistance needed.

#### NEW VAN FOR VETER-**ANS AFFAIRS OFFICE**

A new 2016 Chevrolet 12-passenger van has been received in the middle of December 2015 for the use of the Veterans Affairs office. It just recently had the decals and lettering added for identification. This van will be used to transport veterans to VA hospital appointments, sign-up for VA healthcare, trips to special events, assistance for parades in which the Honor Guard has been asked to participate, and also for general use for transportation to the Tribal Complex and other official capacities of the Veterans Affairs Office.



#### ADMINISTRATIVE OP-**ERATIONS** TRAINING FOR NATIONAL CEME-**TERY STANDARDS**

Director Galen Greenwalt attended two separate trainings lately. In the month of December 2015, he took a course given by the NCA (National Cemetery Administration of the VA) in St. Louis, MO. This December training covered the role of a Cemetery Representative: Veteran eligibility, process of burial benefits, headstones and markers, and other services to veterans in this regard. In January 2016, Galen attended the BOSS (Burial Operations Support System) Essentials training, again in St. Louis. This seminar was a comprehensive overview of the input needed for: Case establishment for burial benefits, managing the files, ordering headstones/markers, maintaining gravesite information, reports and other functions. If anyone has questions for future veteran burial benefits needs, please

#### **VETERANS AFFAIRS** DEPARTMENT WORK

call our office at any time.

In the past months, Director Galen Greenwalt has been busy with assisting veterans with filing paperwork to obtain copies of discharge papers (DD-214s), gathering documentation for those filing disability appeals, giving rides to various veterans with doctor and clinic appointments in Oklahoma City, taking several veterans to the VA hospital enrolment office to sign up for VA Healthcare, answering phone calls from those needing educational benefit information, and handing out copies of the Veterans Benefit booklet. In addition, Director Greenwalt and the Cemetery Sexton, Tommy Hawkins, met with the Director of the Ft. Gibson National Veterans Cemetery, to gather tips and helps from officials from another veterans cemetery.

#### VIETNAM WAR COM-**MEMORATIVE PART-**NER PROGRAM

The Seminole Nation of Oklahoma Veterans Affairs Department has joined with



other groups across the country to be a Commemorative Partner with the Vietnam War 50th Anniversary Program. We will begin to plan events and activities that will recognize Vietnam Veterans and their families' service, valor and sacrifice. It will also be a time to pay tribute to the contributions made on the home front by many here in the U.S. during the Vietnam Era.

#### ROLLING THUNDER **EVENT THIS COMING MAY 2016**

Our Seminole Nation has been given the honor of being asked to host the Kick-Off Event in Oklahoma for "Rolling Thunder" chapters who will ride through our state next May. This event here will be held on Friday-Saturday, May 13-14, 2016. Rolling Thunder is an advocacy group, mainly made up of motorcycle enthusiasts who are veterans. Their main project is an annual group ride called the "Freedom Ride," which is a motorcycle rally to the Vietnam Wall in Washington DC on Memorial Day. This will be a special time for the Seminole Nation veterans and friends to come for a great veterans' event. More information will be published soon.

#### REMINDER: "SILENT **WARRIORS**" **GROUP MEETINGS**

All veterans are encouraged to be a part of our "Silent Warriors" group meetings which are twice a month. The meetings are held on the first and third Tuesdays of each month, starting at 5 pm. It is a time for veterans of all time frames, combat and non-combat, to talk, listen and share in a relaxed atmosphere of camaraderie and discussion of common experiences concerning military life. All those who have prior military service are welcome! Call our office if you need more information or have any questions. In addition, a unique Female Veterans Group Session is being held on the third Thursday of each month, being held at the Grisso Mansion on Hwy 9 in Seminole.

#### **VETERANS** BENEFITS **BOOKLET**

The Veterans Office here has acquired copies of the booklet entitled Know Your Benefits: Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors, latest edition. They are available FREE to anyone who would like a copy. Many have already called our office and been given a copy.

#### FOR MORE INFORMA-TION OR ASSISTANCE

For more information or conversation about any VA issues, please contact us here at the Veterans Services Office at (405) 234-5242 or my cell number at (951) 533-1407.

Income Tax Credit using the tiebreaker rules, neither A nor B would be able to claim the EITC unless they had a second child. If no child qualifies, neither parent can take the credit.

As you can see, filing status and the tiebreaker

rules can make for tax problems and may even result in an audit. Tribal members who seek clarification or are uncertain should contact Oklahoma Indian Legal Services, Inc. at (405) 943-6457. We can consider a tribal taxpayer's unique

position, facts, and circumstances, and advise on the correct filing status for use in filing a tax return. If you have specific questions about this or other tax issues, please e-mail them to oils@oilsonline.org.

# IN MEMOTAM RAVKERRICETV



# Michael Ray Harjo



Funeral services for Michael Ray Harjo were held on Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at the Earlsboro Indian Baptist Church, with Rev. Houston Tiger and Rev. Jack Davis. Interment followed at the Johnson Family Cemetery south of Wetumka, Okla.

Michael passed away Saturday, January 9, 2016 in Midwest City, Okla. He was 51. Michael was born September 28, 1964 in Pawnee, Oklahoma to Raymond Marcey Harjo and Susie (Johnson) Harjo.

Michael was raised in Seminole and was a proud member of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma.

Michael was a cook at the Red Fork restaurant in Harrah, however most of his working life was spent as a roofer. He loved playing softball, watching football, basketball and going fishing as a young boy with his father and uncle Charlie.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sisters', Betty Carpitcher, Lena Ponkilla; brothers, Barney Ray Harjo, Soloman Harjo and Kenneth Harjo.

Survivors include his wife JoAnn Harjo of Mcloud, Okla., two sons; Cody Meely and Joseph Murdock both of Mcloud, Okla.; a daughter Michelle Harjo of McLoud, Okla.; two brothers Richmond Harjo and his wife Michelle of Ft. Gibson, Okla. and Travis Harjo of Shawnee, Okla.; four sisters, Arlene Davis and her husband Jack of Okemah, Christine McKinney and her husband John of Earlsboro, Okla., Marilyn Toledo and her husband Polo of Oklahoma City, Okla., and Carol Harjo of Shawnee, Okla.; seven grandchildren; Josylyn Murdock, Jo Lyn Murdock, Lucas Murdock, Cobie Peacock, Ania Jo Murdock, Jolissa Murdock, and Chanelle Murdock.

Casket bearers were Tony Woodward, Peter Wolfe, Daniel Wolfe, Cody Meely, Jessee Factor and Emerson Davis.

Honorary bearers were Davis Murdock, Sonny Murdock, John McKinney, Mark Wolfe, Marshall Ponkilla and Phillip Peacore.

Services were under the direction of Swearingen Funeral Home in Seminole.

# Annella "Ann B" Belle (Carpitcha)



Funeral services with Militarty Honors for Annella Belle (Carpitcha) "Ann B." Kemp were held Thursday, December 31, 2015 at Swearingen Funeral Home Chapel in Seminole, Okla. with Frank Brewer. Interment followed at the Seminole Nation National Veteran's Memorial Cemetery in Seminole County, Okla.

Annella passed away December 25, 2015. She was 93. She was born March 6, 1922 in Maud, Okla. to parents Jimpsey Carbitcha and Lucinda (Coker) Carbitcha. Annella graduated from Central school and joined the United States Army Air Force. While in the Army Air Force, she earned the rank of Sergeant and served as a Cryptographic Technician. Ann also earned two Overseas Service Medals, the American Campaign Medal, the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, the World War II Victory Medal, the WAAC Service Medal, and the Good Conduct Medal.

Following her discharge from the United States Army, she moved to the Houston, Texas area where she owned and operated Conroe Lock & Key Smith Company in Conroe, Texas. Ann was a member of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma and was also of the Episcopalian Faith.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Jimpsey Carbitcha and Lucinda (Coker) Carbitcha, one sister, Maxine Cowan, her first husband, Noah Woolridge, her second husband, Marvin Kemp, and a close companion, Earl Livesay of Conroe, Texas.

Survivors include one sister, Majel Carpitcha of Oklahoma City, Okla., one niece, WaDean Cowan Maud, Okla., by one nephew, Wallace Cowan, Jr. of Maud, Okla.; and by a host of other nieces, nephews, other family and dear friends.

Services were under the direction of Swearingen Funeral Home in Seminole.

# John Bryant **McCartlin**



Funeral services for John Bryant McCartlin were held Wednesday, January 20, 2016 at Swearingen Funeral Home Chapel in Seminole with Rev. Bill Barnett and Father Paul Zahel O.S.B. Interment followed at Vamoosa Cemetery.

John passed away Monday, January 18, 2016 at Norman Regional Hospital in Norman, Okla. He was 51. John was born December 26, 1964 in Dallas, Texas to parents, Glen McCartlin and Maggie (Smith) McCartlin. John participated in a program at St. Gregory's in Shawnee called, Integrations "Home Supported Living". The program, thanks to Father Paul Zahel O.S.B. along with his support team, gave so much of themselves to provide opportunities for the disabled. John liked to travel, go to movies, attend birthday parties, and Church. He also liked to visit the Second

Chance Animal Shelter. He also enjoyed swimming, playing games, fishing and riding horses at St. Gregory's. The family wishes to thank Father Paul Zahel O.S.B. and the people who gave of themselves, time, love and encouragement to John. "Home Integrations Supported Living," has been a true blessing to our family.

He was preceded in death by his father, Glen McCartlin; his mother, Pauline "Maggie" Smith; and by three brothers, Leo Wise, Leon Wise, and James Smith.

Survivors include four sisters, Maxine Clifford and her husband Tom Clifford of Pine Ridge, S.D., Constance Thlocco and her husband Bryant of Kansas City, Mo., Sheila Hooper and her husband Tim of Maud, Okla., and Pauline Francis Smith of Omaha, N.E.; niece, Annie Horton and Scott Horton of Seminole, Okla.; nephew, Justin Hooper and his wife Jennifer of Seminole, Okla.; and a host of nieces and nephews from South Dakota and Kansas City, Missouri; and many other family and dear friends.

Casket Bearers were Tim Hooper, Don Hightower, Tony Hightower, Sid Shankas, Justin Hooper and Stephen Whinter.

Services were under the direction of Swearingen Funeral Home in Seminole, Okla.

#### education continued from

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Residency in either city is not required, however, careful consideration will be given to those intern applicants who can obtain housing in

#### Other American Indian Graduate Center • (AIGC) Scholarships

either location.

AIGC manages a number of private funds and awards and provides these as supplemental • scholarships (\$500-\$5000 each) based on field of study and other criteria defined by the donor. All successful applicants for the AIGC • **Fellowships** (above) are considered for these fellowships and will be notified at the time that awards are announced. There is no separate application process for these awards. These funds are known as:

- Grace Wall Barreda Memorial Fellowship - Public Health and Enviornmental Studies
- Ruth Muskrat Bronson Fellowship Primarily Nursing or Health related

- programs
- Jeanette Elmer Fellowship - Library Science
- Edna Furber Fellowship - Women studying Creative Fine Arts
- Katrin Lamon Fellowship - Literature or Journalism
- Gerald Peet Fellowship - Medicine
- John Rainer Memorial Fellowship - Continuing AIGC Fellows in all degree areas
- Dr. Beryl Blue Spruce Memorial Fellowship - Pueblo Citizens studying Medicine or Nursing (OB/GYN)
- Dr. George Blue Spruce Fellowship -Dentistry

# Summer **Internships**

**AIIP Summer Enrich**ment Program

The AIIP Summer Enrichment Program is designed to help American Indian studnets gain exposure to the diverse aspects of the field of psychology through research, clinical, and educational activities. The program consists of three components.

- Research: participants work with faculty and graduate students in the clinical, counseling, achool, and lifespan develpomental (experimental) psychology programs on psychological research projects.
- Clinical: Participants visit several tribal healthcare or social services agencies to see first hand what psychologists, social workers, and other professionals who provide direct services to Indian peoples do.
- Professional Development: participants attend weekly seminars on subjects ranging from ethics to research design to tribal law. Guest speakers from around the state and the nation are brought in to lecture and discuss with participants about topics relative to American Indian Psychology.

The program is heald for four weeks each summer through the

month of June. After a day of orientation to the program, participants typically spend weekdays satisfying the research and clinical components of the program and Saturday mornings on professional development. The program also provides a variety of cultural experiences including tours of several Indian Nations around the state of Oklahoma, powwows, and other exposure to NAtive arts and cultures. Participants are given living stipends and on-campus housing is available. Applicatns for the AIIP Summer Enrichment Program must meet the following requirements:

- Must be enrolled in a federally recognized tribe,
- Must hold a Bachelor's or Master's degree in psychology or related fields with interest in graduate study.

Applications for the Summer Enrichment Program are due April 15 of each year. If you are eligible for AIIP Summer Enrichment Program and/or interested in more information, send inquiries to:

Dr. John M. Chaney 109 N. Murray Department of Psychol-Oklahoma State University Stillwater, OK 74078 (405) 744-6113 email: aiip@okstate.edu National **Education** for Women's (N.E.W.) Leadership The award-winning

National Education for Women's Leadership institute (N.E.W. Leadership) educates and empowers undergraduate women to participate actively in politics and public service. The program connects students to policy makers and community activists to engage them in shaping the public agenda.

Launched in 2002, the institute is part of the N.E.W. Leadership National Network at the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.

N.E.W. Leadership is an intensive five day institute that takes place each year on the University of Oklahoma campus and is designed specifically for undergraduate women from colleges and universities across the state of

Oklahoma. Participants reside at the Alpha Phi House and the entire experience, including housing and meals, is offered at no cost to students.

Each year, about thirty undergraduate students are selected for the institute through a competitive application process. Program faculty includes over 50 women leaders from public life. They include elected officials, business leaders, community organizers and members of the judiciary.

The curriculum includes skill building workshops, a campaign simulation, a networking day at the Oklahoma State Capitol, a collaborative action project, panel discussions and more; we bring our together participants to engage directly with Oklahoma's top women leaders.

To date, almost 400 undergraduate women have graduated from the N.E.W. Leadership program. Applications are due March 9!

Apply at: http://www. ou.edu/carlalbertcenter/ womens-leadership/ new-leadership.html

# CONSTITUTION OF THE SEMINOLE NATION OF OKLAHOMA

Adopted March 8, 1969, As Amended February 25, 1989, As Amended December 14, 1991 As Amended September 20, 2008 As Amended July 13, 2013

#### **PREAMBLE**

We, the members of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, in order to promote justice, to continue cooperation with Federal, State and local governments, to encourage the general welfare, to safeguard our interests, to promote social, educational and economic opportunities for our children and for ourselves, and understanding this to be the democratic way pertaining to democracy and self-government by the people of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, do hereby ordain and establish this constitution.

#### **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this body shall be "The Seminole Nation of Oklahoma.

#### **ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of this body shall consist of all Seminole citizens whose names appear on the final rolls of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma approved pursuant to Section 2 of the Act of April 26, 1906 (34 Stat. 137) and their descendants. An enrolled member of another Indian tribe shall not be eligible for membership in the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma.

# ARTICLE III – CHIEF AND ASSISTANT CHIEF

**Section 1.** The executive authority of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma shall be vested in a Chief and Assistant Chief.

Section 2. Any member of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma who is at least 35 years of age and who possesses no less than one-quarter degree of Seminole Indian blood may be eligible for the office of Chief and Assistant Chief. No person who has been convicted of a felony by a court of competent jurisdiction shall be considered eligible for these offices until either pardoned or five years have passed since release from confinement.

**Section 3.** The Chief and Assistant Chief shall be elected for a term of four years pursuant to the provisions of Article X of this constitution and shall serve until their successors have been elected and installed. (As amended, December 14, 1991.)

**Section 4.** The Chief shall appoint, dissolve or remove subordinate committees and representatives and delegates to inter-tribal bodies subject to the approval of the majority of the General Council.

Section 5. The Chief shall preside over all meetings of the General Council and exercise any authority delegated to him by the provisions of this constitution. He shall have general supervision over the affairs of the General Council and shall perform all duties appertaining to the office of chairman. He shall sign all official papers on behalf of the Nation when so directed by the General Council. He shall not vote at Council meetings except in case of a tie.

Section 6. The Assistant Chief shall assist the Chief when called on to do so, and in the absence of the Chief shall preside and when presiding shall have all privileges, duties, and responsibilities delegated to the Chief. In the absence of the Secretary of the General Council, the General Council will appoint a temporary Secretary. In case of the death or resignation or removal of the Chief, the Assistant Chief shall succeed at once to the office of Chief, subject to approval and confirmation as provided in Article IX, Section 3 of this constitution. (As amended, February 25, 1989.)

# ARTICLE IV – GENERAL COUNCIL

**Section 1.** The legislative body of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma shall be known as the General Council and shall consist of two (2) band representatives elected from each of the following fourteen (14) Seminole bands.

g fourteen (14) Seminole bands.

Tusekia Harjo; Tallahassee; Mekusukey;

Thomas Palmer; Fushutche; Rewalke; Ceyvha; Eufaula; Hvteyicvlke; Hecete; Nurcup Harjo; Ocese; Dosar Barkus; and Caesar Bruner.

There must be at least ten (10) members of a band to constitute band status. A band with less than ten (10) members will have no voice in the Council.

Within 90 days from the approval date of this amendment, each band shall submit to the General Council written by-laws which shall describe how the band is governed. A band which has not submitted written by-laws shall have no voice in the Council. (As amended, February 25, 1989; As amended by July 13, 2013.)

**Section 2.** The General Council shall appoint for so long as it desires a secretary from within or without its membership. Any appointee from without the elected membership of the General Council shall not be eligible to participate in any business before that body unless the General Council so desires.

Section 3. Any member of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma who is at least 18 years of age and who possesses no less than one-quarter degree of Indian blood (this provision of degree of blood shall not apply to Freedman Council members) is qualified to sit on the General Council when duly elected pursuant to this constitution. No person who has been convicted of a felony by a court of competent jurisdiction shall be considered eligible for any position on the General Council or any appointment by that body until either pardoned or five years have passed since release from confinement. In the event any question should arise regarding the qualifications of any band representative, candidate for office or appointee, the decision of the General Council shall be final.

**Section 4.** All band representatives of the General Council shall be elected to serve a term of four years or until their successors have been duly elected and installed. All band representatives and the officers serving on the General Council may succeed themselves in office.

**Section 5.** All members of the General Council, appointees and employees of the Nation shall be paid in accordance with a duly adopted ordinance of the General Council. Unless otherwise provided for in this constitution, no enactment of the General Council shall be considered valid unless supported by a majority of those voting in a legal meeting.

# ARTICLE V – POWERS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

The General Council of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, subject to any restrictions contained in the Constitution and laws of the United States, shall have the power to speak or act on behalf of the Nation in all matters in which the Nation is empowered to act. The General Council shall exercise, subject further to any limitations imposed by this constitution, the following powers:

(a.) To promote public health, education and charity and such other services that may contribute to the social and economic advancement of the members of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma

(b.) To negotiate with Federal, State and local governments and others on behalf of the Nation.

(c.) To prevent the sale, disposition, lease or encumbrance of any land or interest in land belonging to the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma or reserved for the benefit of such Nation.

(d.) To manage and lease or otherwise deal with Tribal lands and communal resources in accordance with law.

(e.) To prepare the annual budget request and supplements thereto, to administer any funds within the control of the Nation and to make expenditures from available funds for Tribal purposes. All expenditures of Tribal funds within the purview of this paragraph shall be authorized by resolution duly enacted by the General Council and the amounts so expended shall be a matter of public record open to the members of the Nation at all reasonable times.

**(f.)** To enter into any contract in behalf of the Nation in conjunction with any activity that will further the well-being of the members of the Nation.

(g.) To employ legal counsel.

(h.) To borrow money from any source and pledge or assign chattels or future Tribal income as security therefore, subject to any restrictions imposed by any statutes.

(i.) To exercise any powers not specifically set fourth in this article which at some future date may be appropriately delegated to the General Council. (As amended, February 25, 1989.)

(i.) To establish, levy and collect taxes within

the territorial jurisdiction of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma. (As amended, July 13, 2013)

# ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

**Section 1.** Regular meetings of the General Council shall be held on a day established by the Council in March, June, September, and December of each calendar year, one of which shall be designated the annual Tribal meeting at which the Chief shall make an annual report: Provided, that if the established meeting date falls on a holiday, the meeting shall be held on the same day of the following week. Such meetings shall convene at 10 a.m. The Chief may call a special meeting of the Council at any time he thinks it-necessary. The Chief shall be required to call such a meeting within ten (10) days upon receipt of a request in the form of a petition signed by at least a fifteen (15) members of the General Council: Provided, that no special meeting shall be called except on matters of serious concern to the General Council. Notice of regular and special meetings shall be given at least ten (10) days in advance to all members of the General Council and shall contain the time, place, and purpose. In case of an emergency, the ten (10) day notice period may be waived. Such notice shall also be published in at least one (1i) prominent newspaper within Seminole County and notices posted in proper places. By ordinance the General Council shall provide details on how the wavier will be accomplished and the places for posting of the notices. (As amended, February 25, 1989.)

Section 2. The official meeting place shall be designated by the General Council. All meetings shall be opened to the members of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, and no official business may be transacted by the General Council at any time in the absence of a quorum which shall consist of a fifteen (15) voting band representatives and either the Chief or Assistant Chief, or Temporary Chairman. (As amended, February 25, 1989.)

Section 3. In the event the Chief and/or Assistant Chief refuses or is unable to call or chair a regular or special General Council meeting, a temporary chairman appointed by the General Council shall preside over the meeting of the General Council and the General Council shall be able to conduct official business. The Temporary Chairman shall preside for that one meeting only and shall sign all official papers arising from that one meeting only when so directed by the General Council. The General Council may appoint the Temporary Chairman from within the General Council or from the voting membership of the Seminole Nation. The Temporary Chairman, if not a member of the General Council, shall not be allowed to vote on official business. (As amended, February 25, 1989.)

# ARTICLE VII – ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Section 1.** The order of business at any regular or special meeting of the General Council shall be as follows: Provided, that it may be suspended for any meeting by the General Council.

- 1. Call to order.
- 2. Roll call and prayer.
- 3. Reading of minutes of last meeting.
- 4. Unfinished business.
- 5. Reports of Committees.6. New business.
- 7. Prayer and adjournment.

**Section 2.** The General Council may by appropriate ordinance adopt such rules and regulations as it thinks desirable in carrying out the order of business.

#### ARTICLE VIII – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

The Secretary shall cause to be prepared all minutes, resolutions and ordinances enacted at all meetings and distribute copies, by mail if feasible, to the members of the General Council and to the Area Office. The Secretary shall cause to be maintained files, records, and correspondence of the General Council in an orderly manner for the convenience of the General Council and exercise such other duties as may be specifically delegated to the Secretary. The Secretary shall attend to the giving and serving of all notices of the General Council as required by this constitution. Until the General Council by ordinance directs otherwise, the depository of the Council's records and enactments shall be in the Tribal office in Wewoka, Oklahoma, such documents to become the permanent records of the Seminole Nation.

#### ARTICLE IX – REMOVAL AND THE FILLING OF VACANCIES

**Section 1.** The General Council may by an affirmative vote of nineteen (19) members remove any officer or band representative from office who fails to carry out his or her responsibilities or who is found guilty in any court of competent jurisdiction of a misdemeanor involving dishonesty, or for any gross neglect of duty or misconduct reflecting on the dignity and integrity of the General Council. No vote taken, however, shall be considered valid unless the individual so charged shall have been given a written statement containing the charges made against him or her at least ten (10) days before any meeting of the General Council and has been afforded an opportunity to answer, before the General Council, and all of the written charges. (As amended, February 25, 1989.)

Section 2. The General Council shall automatically declare vacant the seat of anyt member who dies, resigns, is found guilty of a felony in any court of competent jurisdiction, or who fails or refuses to attend two regular meetings in succession unless excused by the General Council.

Section 3. In case of the death, resignation or removal of the Chief, the General Council at its next regular meeting shall confirm the Assistant Chief as Chief. In the case of the death, advancement, resignation or removal of the Assistant Chief, the General Council at its next regular meeting shall by an affirmative vote of fifteen (15) of its members select a qualified member of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma to fill the vacancy. It shall be the responsibility of the bands to fill, pursuant to Seminole tribal customs, any vacancy which may occur in their representation. Any member of the General Council seated pursuant to this section shall serve only until the completion of his or her predecessor's unexpired term. (As amended, February 25, 1989.)

**Section 4.** In case of the death or resignation or removal of both the Chief and Assistant Chief, the General Council shall appoint the Chief and Assistant Chief until a special election is held if such an election is deemed necessary by the General Council. The Chief and Assistant Chief appointed or elected pursuant to this section (Section 4) shall serve only until the next general election as provided for in Article X, Section 2. The appointed Chief and Assistant Chief shall have all powers granted an elected Chief and Assistant Chief under this constitution. (As amended, February 25, 1989.)

## ARTICLE X – ELECTIONS

Section 1. Every member of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma as defined in Article II of this constitution shall be eligible to vote in any general or special election: Provided, that they are at least 18 years of age. Voting shall be by secret ballot.

**Section 2.** All elections (subsequent to the first election held under this constitution) of Council members, Chief and Assistant Chief, shall be called -pursuant to the provisions of this article: Provided, that the date of elections and any additional rules and regulations not inconsistent with this constitution, shall be established in an ordinance duly enacted by the General Council, and that all future election dates shall be no more than four (4) years apart.

**Section 3.** The Chief shall appoint, subject to approval of the General Council, an election board consisting of three members. The election board shall conduct all regular and special elections for Council members, Chief and Assistant Chief. The election board shall be charged with the responsibility of maintaining a list of registered and qualified voters, register persons eligible to vote, determine the eligibility of all candidates for office, and for counting ballots. The election board shall also be charged with the responsibility of determining the number and location of voting places. The election board shall elect from among its members a Chairman and a Secretary. The election board may appoint as many assistants as it deems necessary to conduct the elections.

**Section 4.** All candidates for office shall file with the election board and pay the fee prescribed by the General Council.

**Section 5.** Any person possessing the qualifications for Chief or Assistant Chief as set forth in Article III, Section 2 of this constitution may file for the office of Chief or Assistant Chief. Election of Chief and Assistant Chief shall be at large. No candidate for Chief or Assistant Chief

shall be considered elected unless he or she has received the majority of the votes cast.

Section 6. Any person possessing the qualifications for General Council members as set forth in Article IV, Section 3 of this constitution, may file for the office of council member from his or her band. Councilmen shall be elected by a plurality of the votes cast. A tie vote for councilmen shall be decided by their band. Election of council members shall be by band and all qualified voters shall be entitled to cast one vote for each seat his or her band has on the General Council to be filled.

**Section 7.** If a candidate for Chief or Assistant Chief does not receive the required majority of votes cast, a run-off election shall be held four weeks after the first election, and subject to all the rules and requirements of a regular general election. In the event of a run-off election, only the names of the two candidates with the highest number of votes shall appear on the ballot.

#### **ARTICLE XI – OATH OF OFFICE**

The newly elected Chief, Assistance Chief and members of the General Council shall be installed and take office at the first regular meeting following their election. The installation of the newly elected Chief, Assistance Chief, and members of the General Council elected at the first election held pursuant to this constitution shall be performed by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs or his authorized representative. Thereafter, installation of newly elected officials of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma shall be performed by the outgoing Chief or a person appointed by him. No official shall assume office under this constitution until he or her shall take the following Oath of Office:

\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of \_ will to the best of my ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States, and the Constitution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma." (As amended, February 25, 1989.)

#### ARTICLE XII – BILL OF **RIGHTS**

**Section 1.** Each Seminole Indian citizen by blood of this body shall be entitled to membership in a Seminole Indian Band. Each Seminole Freedman citizen of this body shall be entitled to membership in a Freedman Band. Members of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma shall belong to their mother's band: Provided, that in the event a member's mother is not a member of the Seminole Nation, such member shall be entitled to membership in the band of such member's father. One must remain in his own band. No member shall be entitled to belong to more than one band at any one time. All members shall be guaranteed equal economic opportunities and freedom of association and assembly.

**Section 2.** Nothing in this constitution shall be interpreted in a way which would change or adversely affect the rights and privileges the members of this body have as citizens of the United States. (As amended, February 25, 1989.)

**Section 3.** The individual vested property rights of any member of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma shall not be affected in any way whatsoever by the provisions of this constitution without the consent of such individual member.

### ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENT

**Section 1.** This constitution may be amended by a majority vote of the qualified voters of the tribe who vote in a special election called for that purpose by the Chief of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma pursuant to rules and regulations the General Council shall prescribe. It shall be the duty of the Chief to call such an election upon the request of fifteen (15) members of the General Council. (As amended, September 20, 2008.)

**Section 2.** A notice in the form of a resolution duly adopted by the General Council as to the time and place of any election to adopt or reject any proposed amendment must be given not less than sixty (60) days before election day. Such notice must include the full text of any proposed amendment and must appear subsequently at fifteen (15) day intervals in at least two (2) prominent newspapers published within Seminole County.

#### ARTICLE XIV - ADOPTION

This constitution when ratified by a majority of those qualified to vote in a special election of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma pursuant to rules the Council may prescribe, shall be submitted to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and shall become effective upon the date of approval.

#### ARTICLE XV - TERRITORIAL **JURISDICTION**

The territorial jurisdiction of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma shall be within the geographical boundaries established by the Treaty of March 21, 1866, 14 Stat. 755, entered into by the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma and the United States of America, including but not limited to the following property located within said boundaries: property held in trust by the United States of America on behalf of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma; property owned in fee by the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma; restricted and trust allotments; and dependent Indian communities. The territorial jurisdiction of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma shall also extend to all property located outside said boundaries, owned in fee by the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma or held in trust by the United States on behalf of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma. All of said property subject to the territorial jurisdiction of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, both real and personal, shall be exempt from federal and state taxation, when not inconsistent with federal law. (As amended, December 14, 1991)

#### **ARTICLE XVI - COURTS**

**Section 1.** The judicial power of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma shall be vested in one Supreme Court and such District Courts and other subordinate courts as may be established pursuant to law enacted by the General Council.

Section 2. The jurisdiction exercised by the Courts of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma shall be limited to (a) matters arising on trust or restricted land within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, (b) All matters other than Criminal, whether or not arising on trust or restricted land within said jurisdictional boundaries, arising between members of the Nation or involving nonmembers provided that at least one party is Seminole, (c) matters over which the Nation may exercise jurisdiction pursuant to 25 U.S.C. § 1901, et seq., or other federal law whether or not arising on trust or restricted land within said jurisdictional boundaries; and (d) any other matter where jurisdiction is authorized by any federal law, regulation.. The original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court shall extend to a general superintending and administrative control over all inferior courts and all Agencies, Commissions and Boards created by law. The Supreme Court and District Court shall have power to issue, hear and determine writs of habeas corpus, mandamus, quo warranto, certiorari, prohibition and such other remedial writs as may be provided by law and may exercise such other and further jurisdiction as may be conferred by statute. The appellate and the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court shall be invoked in the manner provided by law. The decision of the Supreme Court shall be in writing and shall be final. (As amended, July 13, 2013)

**Section 3.** No Supreme Court Justice, District Court Judge or other judicial official may hold another elective or appointive office within the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma during their tenure as a Justice or Judge.

**Section 4.** Supreme Court Justices, District Court Judges and judges serving on any subordinate courts shall be nominated by the Principal Chief and shall be subject to confirmation by the General Council. Eligibility requirements for nominees and guidelines for the selection process shall be established by the General Council.

**Section 5.** Judges and Supreme Court Justices shall receive for their service salaries provided by statute passed by the General Council. The salary of any Judge or Justice may not be reduced during that person's term.

**Section 6.** The General Council will enact the necessary and appropriate laws to implement and place in operation the provisions of this Article. (As amended, September 20, 2008.)



# SEMINOLE NATION OF OKLAHOMA CONSTITUTION CERTIFICATES OF ADOPTION AND APPROVAL

#### **CERTIFICATION OF ADOPTION 1969**

Pursuant to the election authorized by the Seminole General Council on September 20, 1968, the foregoing constitution and bylaws was submitted to the registered voters of the tribe and was on March 8, 1969, adopted by a vote of 637 for and 249 against. A total of 1,506 eligible Seminole voters registered for the election and the number of valid ballots cast represented 58.8% of those entitled to vote.

/s/Effie G. Kivett Secretary, Seminole Election Comm.

/s/Bennie F. Johnson Chairman, Seminole Election Comm.

March 12, 1969
/s/John Brown
Chairman, Seminole General Council

#### **APPROVAL OF 1969 CONSTITUTION**

I, Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, as required in Article XIV of the Constitution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma hereby approve said document to be effective on the date of this approval.

April 15, 1969
/s/Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner

#### **CERTIFICATION OF ADOPTION 1989**

Pursuant to Resolution No. 88-33 adopted by the General Council of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma on December 17, 1988, five (5) amendments to the foregoing constitution and bylaws were submitted to the registered voters of the tribe on February 25, 1989. All five amendments were ratified with each amendment receiving a majority of the votes cast.

/s/Robert Kernell, Jr. Chairman Seminole Nation Election Board February 27, 1989

/s/ Edwin Tanyan Principal Chief February 27, 1989

### APPROVAL FOR 1988 AMENDMENTS

I, Merritt E. Youngdeer, pursuant to authority delegated to me by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs on December 9, 1988, and as required by Article XIII of the constitution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma hereby approve said amendments to be effective on the date of approval.

/s/Merritt E. Youngdeer Area Director March 10, 1989

### **CERTIFICATION OF ADOPTION 1991**

Pursuant to Resolution No. 91-19 and 91-19A adopted by the General Council of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma on July 27, 1991 and August 29, 1991 respectively, four (4) amendments to the foregoing constitution and bylaws were submitted to the registered voters of the tribe on November 9, 1991. Three of the five amendments were ratified with three amendments receiving a majority of the votes cast.

**1.** Proposed Amendment No. 1 amended the Seminole Constitution by adding new Article XV Territorial Jurisdiction as follows:

# ARTICLE XV – TERRITORIAL JURISDICTION

The territorial jurisdiction of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma shall be within the geographical boundaries established by the Treaty of March 21, 1866, 14 Stat. 755, entered into by the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma and the United States of America, including but not limited to the following property located within said boundaries: property held in trust by the United States of America on behalf of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma; property owned in fee by the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma; restricted and trust allotments; and dependent Indian communities. The territorial jurisdiction of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma shall also extend to all property located outside said boundaries, owned in fee by the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma or held in trust by the United States on behalf of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma. All of said property subject to the territorial jurisdiction of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, both real and personal, shall be exempt from federal and state taxation, when not inconsistent with federal law.

Proposed Amendment No. 1 was adopted by a vote of 118 for and 98 against. BIA approved adoption of Amendment No. 1 on July 17, 1992.

- 2. Proposed Amendment No 2 would have amended the Seminole Constitution by adding a new Article XVI Courts which would have established a tribal court system for the Seminole Nation. Proposed Amendment No. 2 was rejected by the qualified voters of the Nation by a vote of 107 for and 108 against.
- **3.** Proposed Amendment No. 3 would amend the Seminole Constitution by adding a new subsection (j) to Article V which would permit the Nation to levy and collect taxes within the territorial jurisdiction of the Nation. Proposed Amendment No. 3 was rejected by the qualified voters of the Nation by a vote of 91 for and 127 against.
- 4. Proposed Amendment No. 4 would amend the Seminole Constitution by repealing the provision contained in Section 3 of Article III which provided that the election of officers in no way limited the authority of the President of the United States to appoint a Principal Chief of the Seminole Nation pursuant to the Act of April 26, 1906 (34 Stat. 137). The proposed amendment was adopted by a vote of 110 for and 104 against. The Act of October 22, 1970, P.L. 91-495, which provided that the popular selection of the principal chiefs of the Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek and Seminole Tribes of Oklahoma and the Governor of the Chickasaw Tribe of Oklahoma by its members, in effect repealed this provision. Proposed Amendment No. 4 was approved by BIA on July 17, 1992.
- **5.** Proposed Amendment No. 5 would amend Article XII by eliminating the requirement that future amendments to the Constitution of the Seminole Nation be subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Interior (Commission of Indian Affairs). The proposed amendment was adopted by vote of 112 for and 102 against. Proposed Amendment No. 5 was disapproved by BIA on July 17, 1992. Proposed Amendment No. 5 read as follows:

Section 1 of Article XII of the Constitution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma shall be amended by deleting the last sentence of said section as follows:

Amendments so ratified shall be submitted to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and shall have full force and effect from the date of his approval.

#### APPROVAL FOR 1991 AMENDMENTS

I, Theodore Quasula, Acting Director, Office of Tribal Services, by virtue of the authority granted to the Secretary of the Interior and delegated to me by 230 D.M. 2.4, and by Article XIV of the Constitution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma do hereby approve the forgoing Amendments Nos. 1 and 4 to the Constitution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, PROVIDED, That nothing contained in this approval shall be construed as authorizing any action under this Constitution.

/s/Theodore Quasula Acting Director, Office of Tribal Services July 17, 1992

### APPROVAL OF 2008 AMENDMENTS

Pursuant to Resolution No. 2009-79 adopted by the General Council of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma on July 10, 2008, two (2) amendments to the foregoing constitution and bylaws were submitted to the registered voters of the tribe on September 20, 2008. Both amendments were ratified, receiving a majority of the votes cast as certified by the Seminole Nation Election Board (Dee Bennett, Kissie L. Mouse and Timothy R. Hooper).

- Amendment No. 1 added a new Article XVI Courts and established the Nation's judiciary system.
- Amendment No. 2 amended Article XIII –
   Amendment by removing the requirement that future constitutional amendments be submitted to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

I, Robert K. Impson, (Acting) Regional Director, Eastern Oklahoma Region, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior by virtue of the authority granted by the Act of June 26, 1936, (49 Stat. 1967) and under the authority delegated by 130 DM 3 and 3 IAM 4.4, do hereby approve the Constitution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, as amended. PROVIDED, that nothing contained in this approval shall be construed as authorizing any action under this Constitution that would be contrary to Federal law.

/s/Robert K. Impson (Acting) Regional Director Eastern Oklahoma Region Bureau of Indian Affairs 3100 W. Peak Blvd. Muskogee, Oklahoma 74401 September 2, 2010

#### **APPROVAL OF 2013 AMENDMENTS**

Pursuant to Resolution No. 2013-50 adopted by the General Council of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma on March 2, 2013, one (1) amendment to the foregoing constitution and bylaws were submitted to the registered voters of the tribe on July 13, 2013. The amendment was ratified, receiving a majority of the votes cast as certified by the Seminole Nation Election Board (Glenn Davis, Debbie Johnson, and Mary A. Jackson).

Amendment corrected the names of certain Bands in Article IV, General Council, Section 1.

Pursuant to Resolution No. 2013-51 adopted by the General Council of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma on March 2, 2013, one (1) amendment to the foregoing constitution and bylaws were submitted to the registered voters of the tribe on July 13, 2013. The amendment was ratified, receiving a majority of the votes cast as certified by the Seminole Nation Election Board (Glenn Davis, Debbie Johnson, and Mary A. Jackson).

Amendment to amend the jurisdiction of the Courts in Seminole Nation in Article XVI, Courts, Section 2.

Pursuant to Resolution No. 2013-52 adopted by the General Council of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma on March 2, 2013, one (1) amendment to the foregoing constitution and bylaws were submitted to the registered voters of the tribe on July 13, 2013. The amendment was ratified, receiving a majority of the votes cast as certified by the Seminole Nation Election Board (Glenn Davis, Debbie Johnson, and Mary A. Jackson).

Amendment of subsection (j) to Article V, Powers of the General Council.

#### DISAPPROVAL OF 2000 AMENDMENTS

In its September 21, 2001 Memorandum Opinion in The Seminole Nation of Oklahoma v. Norton, Civil Action No. 00-2384 (CKK), the United States for the District of Columbia remanded, for action by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, six (6) proposed amendments to the 1969 constitution of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma (as amended March 10, 1989). The Southern Plains Regional (SPR) Director has recommended we disapprove the amendments. We agree.

A majority of the voter in the July 1, 2000, election voted in favor of each of the described amendments:

- Amendment No. 1, adding new Article XVII

   Courts, amending the Preamble to reflect the separation of powers, and amending Articles
   IV and V outlining the respective authorities of the Principal Chief and Chairperson of the General Council;
- Amendment No. 2, Powers of the General Council --Adding to the powers of the General Council to include Taxation Authority;
- Amendment No. 3, Territorial Jurisdiction -- Amending Article XV Territorial Jurisdiction to establish jurisdiction and extend the boundary line of the Seminole Nation further to the East to include the area purchase from the Creek Nation in 1881;
- Amendment No. 4, Chief and Assistant Chief
   First sentence of Article III, Section 3 be amended to establish term limits for the elected office of the Principal Chief and Assistant Chief;
- Amendment No. 5, Initiative and Referendum Powers -- Creating a new Article of the Constitution to allow for initiative and referendum process by members of the Seminole Nation; and
- Amendment No. 9, an amendment to empower the General Council to revise a congressionally approved judgment distribution plan adopted pursuant to the Act of April 30, 1990, Pub L. 101-277, 104 State. 143, which provides for the use and distribution of funds awarded to the Seminole Indian in Dockets 73, 151, and 73-A of the Indian Claims Commission.

Although there is no evidence that the failure to comply with the express notice requirements of the constitution made any difference in the outcome of the election on the amendments, it remains that the Nation did not follow constitutionally established requirements before they held the special election and the courts have held the Department to a strict compliance with the notice provision. Since amendment 9 would require congressional action, the tribe should consult with the Bureau's legislative affairs office if it wishes to pursue that amendment. Therefore the amendments are disapproved.

/s/Michael R.
Acting Director, BIA,
Washington D.C.
March 14, 2008